CLAIMS:

Sub A1

1. A method of distinguishing between an input or output signal on a bi-directional pin of a model of a hardware circuit, comprising the steps of:

for a bi-directional pin of said model applying signals to said pin at a reduced drive strength such that a driven signal on said pin will be superimposed over the applied signal; and

comparing the drive strength on the bi-directional pin and responsive to said comparison determining whether the bi-directional pin is an input or output.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of providing an output to indicate if the bi-directional pin is an input or an output.

Sub A2

3. A method according to claim 1 or 2 wherein said model is a digital model.

4. A method according to claim 3 wherein said digital model is a HDL model.

Sub A3

5. A method as claimed in claim 4, wherein the HDL model utilises the standard HDL values and a strong signal on the bi-directional pin is replaced by a Z in said applying step.

6. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein any output from said model has a drive strength greater than said reduced drive strength.

7. A system for distinguishing between an input or output signal on a bi-directional pin of a model of a hardware circuit, said system comprising:

means for applying signals to a bi-directional pin of said model at a reduced drive strength such that a driven signal on said pin will be superimposed over the applied signal; and

means for comparing the drive strength on the bi-directional pin and responsive to said comparison determining whether the bi-directional pin is an input or output.

8. A system as claimed in claim 7, wherein said system is a computer system.

Sub A4

9. A computer program comprising program code means for performing any of the steps of any of claims 1 to 6.